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ABSTRACT

This handbook is designed as a guide to help students with disabilities take another step in preparing for "life after high school." While high school is an exciting time, what you do after high school can be just as exciting if you have done some careful and thoughtful planning. Students' "Transition Plans" include: thinking about their strengths as individuals, knowing what interests them, and considering different types of work and jobs. In addition, students must identify what knowledge and skills are needed for work and figure out how to get that knowledge and those skills. Finally, they must apply for, and get, fulfilling and rewarding work. Students transition and go in many different directions after high school. Some choose to go right into the workforce. Some go into the military service. Still others go on to postsecondary education. Students with disabilities have all of these options too. This guide deals with the last of these options, postsecondary education. Postsecondary education includes many kinds of education and training programs, technical college degree and certification programs, apprenticeship experience, two- and four-year colleges, private trade schools, on-the-job training, and more. (Author)

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Opening Doors to Postsecondary Education and Training: Planning for Life after High School

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
September 2003

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Opening Doors

to Postsecondary Education and Training

Message from State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster

Last year when I assumed the role of State Superintendent, I made a promise to the citizens of Wisconsin – a "New Wisconsin Promise" – to focus the efforts of the Department of Public Instruction on ensuring that all students are given the opportunity to have a quality education. This promise is really about you, our young people, and about raising our expectations of what ALL students can accomplish. Planning for life after high school and postsecondary education is an integral piece of a quality education. We want all students to leave our schools with feelings of hope and opportunity for the future. In taking responsibility for this promise, we have created this handbook.

This "Opening Doors" handbook has been created to assist you, your parents, school counselors, and others on your IEP team in planning for your postsecondary experience. It includes information to help you understand your strengths and identify the support and resources you will need to be successful at the postsecondary level. In addition, this handbook will help you develop advocacy skills so you can take advantage of the time you are in high school to plan your transition to postsecondary education.

Remember, you will have many who will support you in your planning, but in the end you will need to make the decisions. Being well informed will help ensure that you have every opportunity to enjoy all the benefits a postsecondary educational experience can bring.

Good luck as you continue to plan your future.

A QUALITY EDUCATION FOR EVERY CHILD

New Wisconsin Promise

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

ELIZABETH BURMASTER
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

SEPTEMBER 2003

Planning for Life After High School

A HANDBOOK FOR

- Students
- School Counselors
- Teachers
- Parents

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Overview of Transition To Postsecondary Education

This handbook is designed as a guide to help students with disabilities take another step in preparing for "life after high school." While high school is an exciting time, what you do after high school can be just as exciting if you have done some careful and thoughtful planning. Students' "Transition Plans" include:

- thinking about their strengths as individuals,
- knowing what interests them, and
- considering different types of work and jobs.

In addition, students must identify what knowledge and skills are needed for work and figure out how to get that knowledge and those skills. Finally, they must apply for, and get, fulfilling and rewarding work.

Students transition and go in many different directions after high school. Some choose to go right into the workforce. Some go into the military service. Still others go on to postsecondary education. Students with disabilities have all of these options too.

This guide deals with the last of these options, *postsecondary education*. Postsecondary education includes many kinds of education and training programs, technical college degree and certification programs, apprenticeship experience, two- and four-year colleges, private trade schools, on-the-job training, and more.

TIMELINE FOR PLANNING

Thinking about how you want to live your life – explore options

☐ Exploring Lifework* Options	Grades 7-9
☐ Exploring Postsecondary Options	Grades 8-10
☐ Exploring Student Choices	Grades 8-10

Planning and preparing for postsecondary education

☐ Planning and Preparing – Academics	Grades 8-12
☐ Planning for a Career	Grades 9-10
☐ Planning for Personal-Social Choices	Grades 8-12

Exploring Postsecondary Choices Grades 9-10

- ☐ Apprenticeship
- ☐ Technical College
- ☐ 2-year College
- ☐ 4-year Independent College/University
- ☐ 4-year State College/University

Selecting a Postsecondary Institution Grades 10-11

Applying to a Postsecondary Institution Grades 11-12

*Exploring lifework options includes discovering your interests, talents, and abilities. Then you can start to plan for developing skills and knowledge that will lead to a job that will be a good fit for you.

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Deciding to Attend a Postsecondary Institution

Although 8th, 9th and 10th grades are early in your school career, they are important times to begin thinking about and planning for those things you will be looking forward to after graduation. You may want to continue your education or enter an apprenticeship program. Both of these options require career exploration and research. Most schools offer classes on career education. Make sure you are included.

> *"Start asking now. Don't let pride get in your way – ask for help while you can."*
>
> — Liz, college graduate with a learning disability

Once you have narrowed your career choices, it is important to find out the required training and education for your choice(s). If further education is required, you need to find which schools offer a major or certification program. Your school counselor and/or school librarian can help you with this research. There may be special requirements for specific programs.

After high school, the rules change.

The following charts describe general differences in various areas between public high school and postsecondary education.

LAWS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

HIGH SCHOOL	POSTSECONDARY
1. Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).	1. Section 504 and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Accessibility and reasonable accommodations.
2. Covers ages 3-21 or until regular high school diploma requirements are met.	2. Covers students with disabilities regardless of age; schools may not discriminate in recruitment, admission, or after admission, solely on the basis of a disability.
3. School attendance is mandatory.	3. Students decide to attend and will probably pay tuition.
4. Districts are required to identify students with disabilities through free assessment and the individualized education program (IEP) process.	4. Students are responsible for revealing and providing current documentation of a disability. They must be self advocates.
5. Students receive special education and related services to address needs based on an identified disability.	5. Formal special education services are not available.
6. Services include individually designed instruction, modifications, and accommodations based on the IEP.	6. Reasonable accommodations may be made to provide equal access and participation.
7. Individual student's needs based on the IEP may be addressed by program support for school personnel.	7. No formal program support for school personnel is provided.
8. Progress toward IEP goals is monitored and communicated to the parent(s) and/or the student.	8. Students are required to monitor their own progress and communicate their needs to instructors.
9. Schools assist in connecting the student with community support agencies if so identified as a transition need according to the IEP.	9. Students are responsible for making their own connections with community support agencies.

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CLASSES

HIGH SCHOOL	POSTSECONDARY
1. Usually follow a school-directed schedule and proceed from one class to another.	1. Individual students must manage their own time and schedules.
2. General education classes dictated by state/district requirements.	2. Class based on field of study; requirements may vary.
3. Typically, a school year is 36 weeks long; some classes extend over both semesters. Summer classes may be offered but are not used to accelerate graduation.	3. Academic year is divided into two separate 15-week semesters plus a week for final exams. (*Hint:* Some institutions are on a trimester schedule.) Courses are offered fall, spring, and summer semesters, and summer classes may be used to accelerate graduation.
4. Class attendance is usually mandatory and monitored carefully.	4. Attendance policies may vary with each instructor.(*Hint:* Lack of attendance may impact performance.)
5. Classes generally have no more than 30-35 students.	5. Classes may have 100 or more students.
6. Textbooks are typically provided at little or no expense.	6. Textbooks can be expensive. (*Hint:* An anticipated range for a full-time student is $250-$500 per semester.)
7. Guidance is provided for students so they will be aware of graduation requirements.	7. Graduation requirements are complex and vary for different fields of study. (*Hint:* You are responsible for monitoring your progress and seeking advice.)
8. Modifications that change course outcomes may be offered based on the IEP.	8. Modifications that change course outcomes will not be offered. (*Hint:* Modified high school courses may not be accepted in the admission process.)

INSTRUCTORS

HIGH SCHOOL	POSTSECONDARY
1. Grade and check completed homework.	1. May assume homework is completed and students are able to perform on a test.
2. May remind students of incomplete assignments.	2. May not remind students of incomplete assignments. (*Hint:* It's your responsibility to check with your instructor to see if requirements are being met.)
3. May know students' needs and approach students when they need assistance.	3. Are usually open and helpful, but expect students to initiate contact when assistance is needed.
4. May be available before, during, or after class.	4. May require students to attend scheduled office hours.
5. Have been trained in teaching methods.	5. Have content knowledge but not necessarily formal training in teaching methods.
6. Often provide students with information missed during absence.	6. Expect students to get information from classmates when they miss a class.
7. Present material to help students understand what is in the textbook.	7. May not follow the textbook, but lectures enhance the topic area. (*Hint:* You need to connect lectures and textbook.)
8. Often write information on the board or overhead to be copied for notes.	8. May lecture nonstop. If they write on the board, it may be to support the lecture, not summarize it. (*Hint:* Good notes are a must or a tape recorder may be used.)
9. Teach knowledge and facts leading students through the thinking process.	9. Expect students to think independently and connect seemingly unrelated information.
10. Often take time to remind students of assignment and test dates.	10. Expect students to read, save, and refer back to the course syllabus. (*Hint:* Syllabi are your way of knowing exactly what is expected of you, when assignments are due, and how you will be graded.)

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STUDYING

HIGH SCHOOL	POSTSECONDARY
1. Study time outside of class may vary (may be as little as 1-3 hours per week).	1. Generally need to study at least 2-3 hours outside of class for each hour in class.
2. Instructors may review class notes and text material regularly for classes.	2. Students should review class notes and text material regularly. (*Hint:* Use the time between classes carefully.)
3. Expected to read short assignments that are discussed and retaught.	3. Substantial amounts of assigned reading and writing may not be directly addressed in class. (*Hint:* It's up to you to read and understand assigned material or access support, such as books on tape.)

TESTING

HIGH SCHOOL	POSTSECONDARY
1. Frequent coverage of small amounts of material.	1. Usually infrequent (2-3 times a semester). May be cumulative and cover large amounts of material. (*Hint:* You need to organize material to prepare for tests.) Some classes may require only papers and/or projects instead of tests.
2. Make-up tests are often available.	2. Make-up tests are seldom an option and may have to be requested.
3. Test dates can be arranged to avoid conflicts with other events.	3. Usually, scheduled tests are without regard to other demands.
4. Frequently conducts review sessions emphasizing important concepts prior to tests.	4. Faculty rarely offer review sessions; if so, students are expected to be prepared and to be active participants, or find study groups.

GRADES

HIGH SCHOOL	POSTSECONDARY
1. Given for most assigned work.	1. May not be provided for all assigned work.
2. Good homework grades may assist in raising overall grade when test grades are lower.	2. Tests and major papers provide the majority of the grade.
3. Extra credit options are often available.	3. Generally speaking, extra-credit options are not used to raise a grade.
4. Initial test grades, especially when low, may not have adverse effect on grade.	4. First tests are often "wake up" calls to let you know what is expected. (*Hint:* Watch out! They may account for a substantial part of your final grade. Contact the instructor, academic advisor, or student accessibility personnel if you do poorly.)
5. Graduation requirements may be met with a grade of D or higher.	5. Requirements may be met only if the student's average meets departmental standards. (*Hint:* Generally a 2.0 (c) or higher.)

OTHER FACTORS TO CONSIDER

HIGH SCHOOL	POSTSECONDARY
1. State and/or district policies may determine eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities.	1. Postsecondary institution policies may determine eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities.
2. Parents typically manage finances for school-related activities.	2. Students are responsible for money management for basic needs and extra spending money. (*Hint:* Outside jobs may be necessary and one more "activity" to consider for time management.)
3. Parents and teachers may provide support and guidance and setting priorities.	3. Students are responsible for setting their own priorities.

Adapted from: SMU A-LEC Home pages and OKC Community College Accessibility Handbook

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Planning and Preparing

Where do you begin?

Students begin with *themselves* – asking, "What are my abilities and interests?" "What do I want and need from my everyday life as an adult?" "What do I like and dislike about school work, chores at home, jobs I've had to do, hobbies, and volunteer commitments?"

Start taking positive steps by staying involved in your transition process. The key to successful transition to postsecondary education is **early planning**. It is essential for you to maintain high academic standards and expectations throughout your elementary, middle, and high school years.

Skill development and practice (time management, independent living, mobility skills, the ability to ask for specific help when you need it) are also important.

The following questionnaire will help in planning for your transition.

Questions Students Should Ask Their IEP Team Members or Support Network

The following are questions, recommended skills, and steps needed in planning for postsecondary education. Check them off as you address each area.

How do I develop self-advocacy skills?

- ___ Find effective ways to explain your disability and your specific needs.
- ___ Communicate strengths and weaknesses (courses and types of assignments that were easier or more difficult).
- ___ Explain skills that can help you learn.
- ___ Explain academic areas where you may need accommodations (extended test-taking time, note taker, lecture notes, books on tape, and so forth).
- ___ Explain current services provided (accommodations or extra help that have been successful).
- ___ Approach instructors at the beginning of the course regarding what accommodations are needed.
- ___ Explain legal rights (IDEA, ADA, Section 504).
- ___ Communicate what is a reasonable accommodation.
- ___ Actively participate in your IEP meetings by sharing your interests and postsecondary goals with the team. Make sure transition plans are documented in your IEP.

How and when do I develop a timeline for transition planning to postsecondary education?

Pre-High School

- ___ Plan for high school classes (consider college prep classes).
- ___ Develop a list of postsecondary options of interest.
- ___ Develop an understanding of disability and learning styles.
- ___ Develop study skills.
- ___ Start saving money.
- ___ Identify transition needs and career planning goals through the IEP process.
- ___ Remediate and/or compensate for basic-skill deficits.

Ninth Grade

- ___ Contact a guidance counselor and design a class schedule.
- ___ Develop a clear understanding of the nature of your disability and how it affects learning.
- ___ Take courses or participate in groups that promote skills in time management, studying, assertiveness training, stress management, and exam preparation.
- ___ Prepare for all classes.
- ___ Explore career options (interest inventories, career fairs, discussion with school personnel and parents).
- ___ Develop skills for academic independence (time management, study skills, note taking, and so forth).
- ___ Participate in extracurricular activities (athletic and nonathletic).
- ___ Continue to remediate and/or compensate for basic-skill deficits.
- ___ Determine what types of courses are necessary for admission (keep in mind, modified courses may not be acceptable for admission to some postsecondary institutions).
- ___ Investigate assistive technology tools (communicative device, unique computer needs, TTY, and so forth).

Tenth Grade

- ___ Continue academic preparation and remediation/compensation strategies, and identify any assistive technology needs.
- ___ Identify interests, aptitudes, and accommodation needs.
- ___ Continue or develop self-advocacy skills (asking for help, communicating needs to instructors, and so forth).
- ___ Meet with guidance counselor to discuss colleges and college requirements.
- ___ Find out if the schools you are interested in require or recommend that candidates take the ACT or SAT exams. If they do, make preparations to take the appropriate exam.
- ___ Attend college fairs.
- ___ Visit colleges and other postsecondary education training options.
- ___ Gather information about college programs and about services offered for students with disabilities.
- ___ Identify application deadlines for postsecondary support programs.

___ Investigate eligibility requirements and services available through the WI Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and other adult service providers such as Human Services, Center for Independent Living (CIL) and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) partners.

___ Participate in volunteer and paid work experiences.

Eleventh Grade

___ Continue academic preparation and remediation/compensation strategies, assistive technology needs, and self-advocacy skills.

___ Focus on matching interests/abilities and career goals to appropriate postsecondary education choice.

___ Identify appropriate postsecondary choice.

___ Take ACT or SAT with or without accommodations.

___ Establish a tentative career goal.

___ Identify people to write recommendations for you.

___ Invite DVR counselor and other appropriate adult agency representatives to IEP meeting for discussion and planning of post high school options. Complete application, eligibility and Order of Selection (OOS) process and begin discussion about the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) process.

___ Tour postsecondary campuses.

___ Investigate services offered by postsecondary setting and determine which settings match individual needs and goals.

___ Learn to use local public transportation options.

___ Obtain picture identification card or driver's license.

___ Obtain documentation of disability from current assessment (within two years of graduation date) because colleges require assessments.

Twelfth Grade

___ Strengthen self-advocacy skills (your legal responsibilities after the age of 18).

___ Prepare transition packet for disability documentation that includes: evaluation reports, transcripts, test scores, current IEP, medical records, writing samples,and letters of recommendation.

___ Role-play interviews.

___ Talk with students who are receiving services at colleges and other postsecondary education training settings about their experiences.

___ Schedule an interview/tour with institutions of interest.

___ Prepare applications.

___ Jointly develop the IPE with DVR counselor which identifies goals, services, and responsibilities. Develop service plans with other adult service agency providers as appropriate.

How do I select a college?

___ Talk to people who have graduated from your school and have gone on to postsecondary study. Talk to counselors, teachers, and family friends about programs and schools that match your interests.

___ Explore programs at several potential institutions to determine if they match career interests and goals.

___ Investigate the college climate.

___ Investigate the college setting.

___ Investigate the college admission requirements.

___ Investigate available services and history of providing accommodations.

How do I match my interests and needs with course offerings of the college?

___ Determine field of study, interest, or possible major.

___ Identify/match college with interest/field of study.

___ Participate in job-shadowing experiences and write down what skills and knowledge the jobholder used to get things done. Look for courses and college experiences that build that knowledge and those skills.

___ Inquire about class sizes.

___ Inquire about support classes (time management, study skills, writing labs, and so forth).

How do I match my needs to the programs and services offered at the college?

___ Inquire about learning support programs and services available.

___ Inquire about counseling support programs and services available.

___ Inquire about mentoring and/or tutoring programs.

___ Inquire about special assistance for the application process.

___ Inquire about possible requirement waivers for admission.

What are the financial considerations?

___ Determine tuition, books, transportation, and housing costs.

___ Determine tutoring fees.

___ Investigate availability of scholarships.

___ Investigate availability of financial aid.

___ Investigate availability of work-study opportunities.

___ Investigate employment opportunities (on and off campus).

___ Determine with family members the amount of financial support they can offer.

What housing accommodations are available?

___ Determine whether to live on campus or at home.

___ Investigate on-campus housing (rules, computer availability, study rooms, and so forth).

___ Investigate off-campus housing.

___ Inquire about support services (special floor considerations, assistance).

___ Obtain documentation, if single room is a required accommodation.

What transportation provisions are available?

___ Inquire about accessible public transportation.

___ Inquire about parking for students.

What Will Get Me In?

1. Appropriate course selection in high school.
2. High school grades that meet requirements.
3. Admission tests, placement, or ability tests.
4. References and interviews.
5. Specific skills or on-the-job training.
6. Good verbal and quantitative skills.
7. Activities outside of classes.
8. Prior job skills and leadership roles.
9. Determination, self advocacy, and a positive attitude.

Other Things to Keep in Mind

High School Transcripts

High school graduation requirements are set by state and district standards. All postsecondary education institutions will require a copy of your high school transcripts noting the courses you took and your grades.

Your disability cannot be disclosed on any document. High school transcripts may denote modified grades or courses. Modified courses or grades often suggest learning outcomes have been significantly changed. Adaptations and/or accommodations for courses in which the learning outcomes remain the same for all students are not noted on the transcripts. Classes modified to the extent that they change the course outcomes may be acceptable according to the IEP goals and objectives but may not be accepted in the admissions process for postsecondary institutions. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the differences between modified courses and courses in which you require only adaptations or accommodations.

Make sure that you request in writing that the school district keep your records for more than a year.

You may want to consider taking a lower grade in a general education class versus a higher grade in a self-contained special education class. It is your responsibility to check with your school counselor and special education teacher annually to ensure any modified courses you are taking allow you to obtain a regular high school diploma to meet the entrance requirements of postsecondary institutions.

Student Portfolio

If you are planning to undertake a postsecondary education, it is helpful for you to plan early. A portfolio designed to demonstrate your accomplishments and competencies may assist the admissions recruiter at the postsecondary institution. Take your portfolio to your visit and interview on a campus or send a copy with your application. Items you may want to include are:

- Work samples (reports, models, or pictures of projects you have completed, papers you have written, evidence of your participation on teams or school activities, descriptions of volunteer work)
- Interest inventory results
- Letters of recommendation (teachers, school counselors, employers, administrators, coaches)
- State and/or district assessment results
- Personal statement of future goals

After you are admitted to a postsecondary institution, you may be required to submit the following to the support/special services contact at the institution:

- Accommodations that will be needed
- Current documentation and description of disability
- Description of learning style

Questions You Should Be Prepared to Answer

- Why do you want to go to college?
- What are your career goals?
- In what would you like to major?
- Why did you choose this college/university?
- What were your favorite high school courses?
- What were your extracurricular activities?
- Do you plan to work while going to school?

Staff from student support programs may ask these questions:

- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- How does your disability affect your academic performance?
- How do you compensate for your disability?
- What assistance, accommodations, or assistive technology did you receive in high school that were effective?
- What assistance/accommodations do you think you will need to be successful in college?
- Do you plan to take a full load of courses?
- How much time do you study each day, and how do you plan your time?
- Are you willing to put in extra effort compared to other students to earn a college degree?

WHAT CLASSES MUST I TAKE?

Your high school will require you to complete specific courses for graduation. These courses will be valuable no matter what career choice you make.

Whether you choose to go to a technical college, a two- or four-year college or university, the military, an adult apprenticeship, or into a career immediately after graduation, the areas of knowledge described in the chart will make it easier for you to choose from many career options.

Each college and university has formal entrance requirements; ask your guidance counselor or check a school's Internet site for more information.

Required Courses	* Required Content Standards	** Years required to graduate from High School	Years required to be admitted to Technical College	*** Years required to be admitted to 4-Year College
English	Reading/literature, Writing, Oral Language, Media and Technology, Grammar, Research and Inquiry	4	4	4
Social Studies	Geography, History, Political Science, Citizenship, Economics, and the Behavioral Sciences	3	3	3
Math	Mathematical Process, Number Operations and Relationships, Geometry, Measurement, Statistics and Probability, Algebraic Relationships	2	2	3
Science	Science Connections, Nature of Science, Science Inquiry, Physical Science, Earth and Space Science, Life And Environmental Science, Science Applications, Science in Personal And Social Perspectives	2	2	3
Physical Education	Active Lifestyle, Physical Skill Development, Learning Skills, Understanding Physical Activity and Well Being, Health-enhancing Fitness, Respectful Behavior, and Understanding Diversity	1.5		
Health	Health Promotion And Disease Prevention, Healthy Behaviors, Goal Setting and Decision Making, Information and Services, Culture, Media, Technology, Communication, and Advocacy	.5		
Electives	Vocational Education, Driver's Education, Music, Visual, and Performing Art		varies	varies
Foreign Languages	How To Communicate With Other Cultures: Communication, Culture, Connections, Comparisons, Communities			varies
Computer Science & Literacy	Keyboarding, Computer Operations and Terminology, Problem-solving, Applying Computer Technology, Testing Software, Social and Economic Impact of Computers		varies	varies

**Wisconsin model academic content standards **Required by Wisconsin Statute; local districts may have additional requirements ***General Recommendations*

Postsecondary Education Exploration Worksheet

Exploring Choices, Selecting, and Applying for Postsecondary Education

Make and use a copy of these pages for each college you are considering.

Name of College: _____

Internet Address of College: _____

Services, Programs, & Characteristics	Comments/Questions
CHARACTER AND SETTING	
Highly competitive academically	
Moderately competitive	
Not competitive	
Average class rank of current freshman class	
High school grade point average of incoming freshman class	
Average SAT/ACT score	
Size of college	
Size of city/town	
Sororities/fraternities on campus	
Clubs or organizations of interest	
Sports activities (participant or spectator)	
Other	
GETTING THERE/GETTING AROUND	
Miles from home	
Car pools available	
Public transportation available	
Access to buildings	
Effect of weather, construction, & other factors on mobility access	
Cafeteria/food availability	
Access to support services	
Access to fitness facilities	
Access to computer labs	
Other	

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Services, Programs, & Characteristics	Comments/Questions
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	
Minimum ACT score of: _____	
Minimum SAT score of: _____	
Acceptance of nonstandard administration of ACT/SAT	
Open admission/no admission requirements	
Waived ACT/SAT scores	
Class ranking based on high school grade point average	
Admissions interview	
Modified admission for students with disabilities	
Foreign language/math/other specific requirement	
Documentation of intelligence and achievement tests	
Recommendations from high school faculty	
MAJOR FIELD OF STUDY	
Availability of major in chosen career	
Full time years of study for a degree or certificate	
Part time years of study for a degree or certificate	
Requirements for admission into the program of study	
Requirements to remain in the program of study	
CLASSES	
Orientation classes	
Learning-strategies classes	
Study-skills classes	
Time-management classes	
Developmental reading classes	
Basic English classes	
Basic mathematics classes	
Foreign language/math/other requirement waived	
Other	
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	
High tuition fees	
Moderate tuition fees	
Low tuition fees	
Scholarships available	
Financial aid available	
Work study jobs available	
Book or materials rental fees or costs to purchase	
Tutoring fees	
Room and board costs	
Costs for special services	

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Services, Programs, & Characteristics	Comments/Questions
SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	
Alternative test administration (computers, oral, other)	
Extended time for tests	
Flexible format for completing assignments	
Note-takers	
Readers	
Scribes/writers	
Taped textbooks and alternative formats for course materials	
Assistive technology available	
Computers available	
Study groups	
Subject matter tutoring	
Modified instruction	
Opportunities for counseling with support staff	
Peer support group	
Opportunities to receive diagnostic testing	
Development of educational plan	
Career Placement Services	
Interpreters	
Other	
COUNSELING SERVICES	
Student advisors	
Career counselors	
Financial advisors	
Personal counselors	
Health-care providers	
HOUSING	
Off-campus housing availability and affordability	
Residence halls and dining halls on campus	
Halls with no drinking or smoking	
Single-occupancy rooms	
Co-ed halls	
Male-/female-only halls	
Limited guest visitation	
Quiet floors for study	
Study rooms available	
Internet access in rooms	
Computers in residence hall	
Cooking facilities available	

Adapted from Weist-Webb, K. Transition to Post-secondary Education: Strategies for Students With Disabilities. Austin, TX: ProEd, 2000.

Sources of Information

- The Internet
- School counselor
- Internet listings of careers, technical and trade schools, colleges and universities
- School and college catalogs
- Computer guidance systems
- Career information in the library
- Graduates and current students
- Employers
- People of all ages who enjoy their jobs

Who Stays in Postsecondary Education?

Students with disabilities should consider the challenges they will encounter in postsecondary education. You can compensate for the challenges by demonstrating the characteristics of other successful students.

"College is a challenge. However, students must remember that there is pure exhilaration in starting the race, but the payoff is in the completion!"

— Tiffany, college student with a disability

CATEGORY	SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS	UNSUCCESSFUL STUDENTS
Motivation	Goal-oriented Determination, perseverance Self-discipline Willingness to work	Lack of goals or career ideas Immature Procrastinates
Preparation	Academic background Knowledge of study and compensatory techniques Knowledge of learning style Time-management skills	Lack of academic preparation Protected in high school Learned helplessness Lack of study and time management Disorganized
Self-Advocacy	Self-awareness Self-acceptance Knowledge of laws, policies, and resources Assertiveness skills Problem-solving skills	Unrealistic expectations Denial of disability, embarrassment Lack of knowledge of legal rights Lack of self-esteem and self-confidence Lack of effective communication techniques Lack of problem-solving skills

(Hecks-Coolick and Kurtz, 1997)

Final Thoughts

Life is a giant buffet of choices. You are the one who makes the decisions about what you want, where you go, and how successful you will be. Many students with disabilities have successfully completed postsecondary experiences and have wonderful careers. You are the key to your own success. You have the support of your parents, teachers, counselors, and other students, but the adventure is yours. If you plan ahead, develop goals, and are willing to explore your interests and communicate what you need, who knows all that you will be able to accomplish. Begin planning. "It's your future now."

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Definition of Terms Used in this Handbook

Academically Competitive – Describes schools that accept only students who can prove high academic ability and in which many students value learning, achievement, and good grades; also describes students who score well on standardized and non-standardized tests and who get high grades in school.

Accommodation - A change in the usual way of doing things so someone's needs can be met.

ACT and SAT – Standardized tests attempt to measure students' potential to do well in college; Wisconsin colleges that require standardized test scores request the ACT, which is designed to assess high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. It covers four areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning.

ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) – A federal law that prohibits discrimination against individuals who are disabled. A postsecondary school may not discriminate on the basis of disability. See Section 504 for more information.

Advocacy – Speaking up for a cause, person, or idea.

Apprenticeship – A time during which a person learns a trade or occupation, sometimes as part of a trade union program.

Aptitude – A person's ability for learning; a talent or quickness in learning, and understanding in particular areas.

Assertive – Describing someone who declares or states something positively, sometimes with no support or attempt to provide proof.

Assistive Technology – Equipment, hardware, inventions, tools, or other helps for people with disabilities, aids to help people do the tasks of daily life.

Career Fairs – Events in high schools, colleges, or communities that offer the opportunity to talk with people who work in a variety of jobs and who will answer questions about their companies and about the preparation it takes to enter their field.

Career Placement Service – A person, or group of people, at a school or college who help students and graduates learn about and apply for jobs. The amount and kinds of services vary, but some services help arrange interviews, provide information on specific companies, and work with students to identify which jobs will be a good fit.

Correspondence Classes (print based courses) – Some classes from the University of Wisconsin and other schools can be taken by mail. A person registers by phone, mail, or online and arranges to buy books. The teacher sends readings and assignments. Students keep in touch with their instructor by mail, submitting assignments, and sending in exams. Some correspondence courses are for credit; others relate to peoples' personal interests and hobbies.

Education - A program of instruction or a series of experiences, planned to help learners grow in knowledge and/or skill. Education contributes to personal growth. It also can lead to specific outcomes such as diplomas or certifications, driver education, or a college education.

Extracurricular Activities – Doing things that are not part of academic requirements or homework at school. Volunteering at the humane society, working on or acting in plays, participating in sports, and belonging to scouts, 4H, or FFA are a few examples of extracurricular activities.

IEP –Individualized Education Program – The IEP is a written document which ensures that a child with a disability receives a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment. It is the most important legal document written for a child with disabilities. IEPs are developed through discussion at team meetings that include parents and professionals involved in that child's education. The IEP describes the educational process planned for the student and serves as a communication tool among parents, schools, and others involved in the education and training of the individual. It can serve as a method for joint planning, problem solving, and decision-making.

Independent Living Skills – The motivation, knowledge, and ability to live daily life in as self-reliant a way as possible, with the least amount of control by others. Independent living skills can include:

- self-advocacy,
- job seeking and retention,
- budgeting and paycheck management, food planning, selection, buying and preparation,
- recreational activity awareness, planning and participation,
- selection and care of clothing,
- awareness and use of resources including clinics, physicians, adult service agencies, counselors, neighbors, and others,
- dating, co-worker and interpersonal skills, and
- community participation.

Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) - The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 were signed into law on June 4, 1997. The IDEA is a federal law that strengthened academic expectations and accountability for the nation's 5.8 million children with disabilities in public schools. The IDEA required Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) that spell out the educational goals for each child and the services that he or she will receive for his education. It increased parental involvement. The law required regular progress reports to parents, included children with disabilities in state and district assessments, and in setting and reporting on performance goals as they do for non-disabled children. The law required that IEPs include the program modifications and supports for the child and teacher to enable the child to succeed

in the classroom. IEPs must relate clearly to the general curriculum that children in regular classrooms receive. IDEA was also designed to remove financial incentives for placing children in more separate settings when they could be served in a regular classroom, and it included regular classroom teachers in the meetings at which the academic goals of children with disabilities are set. The law also provided continued federal support to improve teacher training nationwide, and adds support of teacher training programs in geographic areas with acute teacher shortages.

Interest Inventories – Verbal, written, or computer exercises that help a person identify what jobs might be a good fit for them based on things they like to do and activities they like to participate in.

Internet Classes (or Web Classes) – Courses students can take via the Internet, on a personal computer with a modem or other Internet connection. Many colleges and universities, including the University of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Colleges, and Technical Colleges offer classes that can be taken entirely by computer. Some entire degree programs can be earned via Internet classes.There is always tuition for these classes. Assignments can be submitted over the Internet. Quizzes and tests are given on a computer. Students have to be motivated to take a class on their own computer. Sometimes the classes meet at a certain time, so students have to schedule their class partcipation. Other courses are available any time.

Job Shadowing – Finding out about different occupations and kinds of work environments by following and watching people actually do the jobs.

Learning Styles – Different people learn in many different ways. Some learn best through hearing, others through reading, others though watching, others through many times of practicing doing something; most of us learn best using some combination of reading, hearing, seeing, doing, or repeating. The activities that help us learn most quickly and thoroughly form our learning style.

Mentoring Programs – A mentor is a trusted person, a counselor, teacher, or other person who helps someone do new things or cope with new surroundings. Mentors usually work with other people in a one-to-one relationship.

Mobility Skills – The word "mobility" refers to the ability of people with vision or other disabilities to move with ease, speed, and safety through the environment. Mobility is distinguished from "orientation" which adds the element of spatial awareness. The maximum ability of a person to get around in their living and working space is a combination of good mobility skills and good orientation skills.

On-the-Job Training – Knowledge and skills that a person acquires while they are in the workplace, already doing some activities related to an existing position description.

Portfolio – A collection of evidence, usually including papers, pictures, descriptions, and recommendations about what a person is able to do. A writer's portfolio would include publications. An artist's portfolio would include samples or pictures of his or her paintings/photographs/drawings. A carpenter's portfolio would include a description of the tools he or she has used, pictures of objects built, descriptions of special talents or abilities written by teachers, supervisors, or mentors.

Postsecondary – After high school.

Private College or University– Postsecondary school run and supported by private individuals or a corporation rather than by a government or public agency. Some private colleges are connected with churches or religious orders; others are independent. Private schools generally charge higher tuition than public colleges and technical schools. Some have smaller enrollments and lower student/teacher ratios than public colleges.

Proprietary School, College, or University – A postsecondary school which is run as a business, to make a profit. Some types of education and training such as pet grooming, broadcasting, bartending, and massage therapy are often provided by proprietary schools.

Public College or University – In the United States, postsecondary school is supported by public funds and provides reduced tuition for education for citizens of the state which supports it. Public colleges and universities are often accountable in some way to the state legislature and other public input.

Remediation/compensation strategies – Ways of addressing, overcoming, or correcting limitations or barriers caused by a disability so a person can participate as fully as possible in daily life activities such as work, education, and training.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – Section 504 was enacted to "level the playing field" - to eliminate impediments to full participation by persons with disabilities. The statute was intended to prevent intentional or unintentional discrimination against persons with disabilities, persons believed to have disabilities, or family members of persons with disabilities. Section 504 protects qualified individuals with disabilities. A postsecondary school may not discriminate on the basis of disability. It must insure that the programs it offers, including extracurricular activities, are accessible to students with disabilities. Postsecondary schools can do this in a number of ways: by providing architectural access, providing aids and services necessary for effective communication, and by modifying policies, practices, and procedures. All programs and services must be provided in an integrated setting. In some instances, architectural access may be the only way to make a program accessible. Qualified interpreters, assistive listening systems, captioning, TTYs, qualified readers, audio recordings, taped texts, Braille materials, large print materials, materials on computer disk, and adapted computer terminals are examples of auxiliary aids and services that provide effective communication. Such services must be provided, unless doing so would result in a fundamental alteration of the program or would result in undue financial or administrative burdens. The most challenging aspect of modifying classroom policies or practices for students with disabilities is it requires thought and prior preparation. The difficulty lies in anticipating needs and

preparing in advance. The actual modifications are rarely substantive or expensive. Some examples are:

- rescheduling classes to an accessible location;
- early enrollment options for students with disabilities to allow time to arrange accommodations;
- substitution of specific courses required for completion of degree requirements;
- allowing service animals in the classroom;
- providing students with disabilities with a syllabus prior to the beginning of class;
- clearly communicating course requirements, assignments, due dates, grading criteria both orally and in written form;
- providing written outlines or summaries of class lectures, or integrating this information into comments at the beginning and end of class; and
- allowing students to use note takers or tape record lectures.

Modifications will always vary based on the individual student's needs. Modifications of policies and practices are not required when it would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.

Self-advocacy Skills – Self-advocacy is the art of speaking up for yourself and your needs and being able to explain a disability clearly and concisely. Once people understand the disability, they may need to know what kinds of actions or things can help overcome a disability. The combination of skills of being able to explain your disability and to speak in favor of the ways of overcoming the barriers brought on by that disability is called self-advocacy.

Stress management – Everyone is nervous and afraid in some situations. There are some specific behaviors, thoughts, and activities that can help people when they feel panic coming on. Different things work for different people, but what works for an individual is his or her stress management routine. That can include slow or regulated breathing, ways of sitting or standing, particular patterns of thought, or remembering and repeating certain words or phrases.

Study Skills – Techniques of scheduling time, finding a quiet place, sitting still, reading, remembering, reviewing, deciding what material is important, and taking helpful notes are all study skills. Study skills classes help individuals find out what particular study skills work best for them.

Technical College – In Wisconsin, a technical college is a school that offers work-related classes, lower division college classes, associate (two-year) degrees, and certificates relating to employment. Technical colleges are public schools with relatively affordable tuition and programs that help a person learn and practice job-related skills.

Time Management Skill – The ability of a person to plan, control, or schedule how they use the time in their day-to-day schedule. The way a person uses time shows which of the things they do are important and which can be dropped. Through planning a person can increase the amount time in which they can work and do other things that interest them, can control the distractions that waste their time, and can increase their effectiveness and reduce stress.

Trade School - A secondary school that offers instruction in a skilled trade (a particular focus on work, such as welding, plumbing, bartending, hairdressing, etc.). Some high schools and trade schools combine classroom learning and work at a job placement.

Training – "Education" is planned to help people learn, know, and remember information. "Training" is about doing: getting and practicing skills. Training improves performance; it brings about a change in ability and a difference in behaviors. A person who participates in training should be able to do something *after* the training they could not do *before* the training. Training usually includes learning, doing, and practice (repetition). The person being trained will know *why* they are doing something and see *how* their task fits in to the bigger picture at work (in manufacturing, or welding, or printing, for instance). A major part of training is learning *what* workers are supposed to do. Another key part is *problem solving* – figuring out what to do when things don't go exactly as planned.

Transcript – An official record, kept by a school, of the courses taken, and the grades earned, by a particular student. Some employers require a copy of a transcript sent directly by the school; others will accept a copy of a students records and grades.

Transition – To change or move from one time of life, role, style, or place to another. High school graduation is a time of transition to a job, college, trade school, the military, or an apprenticeship.

Tutoring Programs – An opportunity to work with someone who can help with class work or skill development, either one-on-one, or in small groups. Tutors are often volunteers who are willing to help other students who have questions or concerns about their work.

Two Year College – In Wisconsin, there is a two-year college system. These colleges offer classes in basic academic subjects (English, foreign language, communication, math, science, social science, and the arts) that lead to Associate degrees. After a person graduates from a two-year college, he or she may want to continue study at a college or university or get a job using what they have learned.

Vocational Rehabilitation – The use of education, training, and therapy to assist a person to learn and be able to do one or more jobs, to have a trade, and to earn a paycheck.

Writing Lab – A place at a school, college, or university where students can bring their writing assignments or projects and get help in expressing themselves, clearly, concisely, and effectively. Students may take drafts of assignments to writing labs and get help in spelling, grammar, or putting good sentences together.

OPENING DOORS TO

Postsecondary Education & Training

FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT
OF PUBLIC
INSTRUCTION

ELIZABETH BURMASTER
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

THE CHALLENGE...

All Wisconsin K-12 and postsecondary education institutions are committed to providing reasonable opportunity and equal challenges to all students, including students with disabilities.

What are your rights?

The term "disability" means different things in public schools and postsecondary institutions.

When serving students with disabilities, public K-12 schools must comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which requires them to identify, document, and provide services based on an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP serves as a monitoring and communication tool for parents, students, and school personnel and provides connections for community services (for example, employment opportunities or adult living). IDEA entitlements end when the student reaches age 21, or when the requirements for high school graduation are met, and the student receives a regular high school diploma.

When serving students with disabilities, postsecondary institutions must comply with Section 504/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which stipulates they

- cannot discriminate in college recruitment, admission, or after admission solely based on a student's disability;
- are required to make individualized, reasonable accommodations at no charge;
- must make modifications "as necessary" to ensure academic requirements are not discriminatory;
- inform students of available services, academic adjustments, and the name of the coordinator of support services; and
- must provide written information on how to access services or request accommodations.

It is important to start planning EARLY for postsecondary education!

What are your responsibilities?

Students within high school need to:

- participate in transition planning by attending meetings, beginning at age 14 or younger, if appropriate,
- talk to their IEP team to discuss interests and preferences, and address postsecondary education planning, and
- learn self-advocacy skills.

Upon turning 18, students with disabilities are legally adults in charge of their own future. Although laws (504/ADA) also protect them, they have responsibilities as they enter postsecondary education.

Students should:

- understand their disability and provide current documentation verifying the disability,
- advocate on their own behalf,
- contact support/special services personnel at the college, technical college, or university,
- notify instructors regarding needed accommodations, and
- arrange for those support services not available in the postsecondary education setting.

What are individual accommodations?

It is important to understand the distinction between accommodations (ensuring *access* to programs and services) and modifications (making *changes* to programs and services). Postsecondary educational institutions must provide needed accommodations including but not limited to:

- special needs counseling
- assistive technology
- testing accommodations
- taped textbooks
- note-takers, readers, and interpreters
- learning/study skills support together.

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Are special education services available in postsecondary institutions?

Simply put-no! Postsecondary institutions may provide academic adjustments if they do not change course outcomes or program requirements or place an undue burden on the institution. However, accommodations must be provided.

Remember... Accommodations are intended to ensure program access that allows students with disabilities to compete equally with their nondisabled peers. Not all accommodations are appropriate for every student.

However... Students with disabilities can succeed in the postsecondary environment by demonstrating the following characteristics of a successful student:

- Be *motivated* and goal-oriented
- Be *academically* prepared
- Demonstrate *self-advocacy skills*
- Demonstrate *organizational skills*
- Demonstrate *time-management skills*

Talk to your instructors and negotiate needed accommodations from the first day of class (or earlier, if possible). Don't wait until the end of the semester!

What postsecondary opportunities exist in Wisconsin?

University of Wisconsin System — Wisconsin has 13 four-year institutions offering undergraduate and/or graduate programs as well as 13 two-year institutions.

Independent Institutions — Wisconsin has 21 private colleges and universities.

Technical College System — Wisconsin has 16 technical colleges offering one- and two-year associate degrees in fields ranging from accounting to web development. Some technical college credits transfer to four-year colleges or universities.

Other Postsecondary Options — See the State of Wisconsin Educational Approval Board website for a complete listing (http://eab.state.wi.us) of other postsecondary options.

Admission requirements vary among postsecondary institutions. Students should discuss the kinds of classes, grades, and entrance requirements needed with a school counselor and the IEP team.

Where to start?

- Ask a school counselor for the postsecondary handbook for students with disabilities, "Opening the Second Door," for additional information and suggestions.
- Refer to the following list of postsecondary institutions.
- Check the websites for additional information.

Information on Accommodations at Specific Campuses

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-SYSTEM

UW System website: www.uwsa.edu

UW Office of Academic Affairs: (608) 262-8778

UW System TTY: 1-800-442-4621

UW-Extension
501 Extension Building
432 North Lake Street
Madison, WI 53706
(608) 262-2011; TTY: (608) 265-9317

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN 4-YEAR COLLEGES

UW-Eau Claire	(715) 836-4542
UW-Green Bay	(920) 465-2849
UW-LaCrosse	(608) 785-6900
UW-Madison	(608) 263-2741
UW-Milwaukee	(414) 229-6287
UW-Oshkosh	(920) 424-3100
UW-Parkside (Racine)	(262) 595-2610
UW-Platteville	(608) 342-1818
UW-River Falls	(715) 425-3531
UW-Stevens Point	(715) 346-3365
UW-Stout (Menomonie)	(715) 232-2995
UW-Superior	(715) 394-8288
UW-Whitewater	(262) 472-4711

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN 2-YEAR COLLEGES

(888) 463-6892

UW Colleges: www.uwc.edu

Disabilities Services: www.uwc.edu/student_services/disability_services.asp

UWC-Baraboo/Sauk County	(608) 356-8724 ext. 219
UWC-Barron County (Rice Lake)	(715) 234-8024
UWC-Fond du Lac	(920) 929-3607
UWC-Fox Valley (Menasha)	(920) 832-2685
UWC-Manitowoc	(920) 683-4707
UWC-Marathon County (Wausau)	(715) 261-6243
UWC-Marinette	(715) 735-4302
UWC-Marshfield/Wood County	(715) 389-6500
UWC-Richland (Richland Center)	(608) 647-8422
UWC-Rock County (Janesville)	(608) 758-6523
UWC-Sheboygan	(920) 459-6633
UWC-Washington County (West Bend)	(262) 335-5201
UWC-Waukesha	(262) 521-5210

WISCONSIN INDEPENDENT COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

Wisconsin Independent Colleges website:
www.wisconsinmentor.org
Phone: (608) 256-7761

Alverno College
Milwaukee (414) 382-6100
(800) 933-3401

Beloit College
Beloit (608) 363-2572
(800) 356-0751

Cardinal Stritch University
Milwaukee
(414) 410-4360 ext.4425
(800) 347-8822

Carroll College
Waukesha (262) 524-7373
(800) 227-7655

Carthage College
Kenosha (262) 551-8500
(800) 351-4058

Concordia University
Mequon (262) 243-4542

Edgewood College
Madison
(608) 663-2281 ext. 2281
(800) 444-4861

Lakeland College
Sheboygan (920) 565-2111
(800) 569-2166

Lawrence University
Appleton (920) 832-6530
(800) 448-3072

Marian College
Fond du Lac (920) 923-7666
(800) 262-7426

Marquette University
Milwaukee (414) 288-1412
(800) 222-6544

Milwaukee Institute
of Art & Design
Milwaukee
(414) 276-7889 ext. 3344

Milwaukee School
of Engineering
Milwaukee (414)277-7281
(800) 332-6763

Mount Mary College
Milwaukee (414) 256-1219
(800) 321-6265

Northland College
Ashland (715) 682-1340
(800) 753-1840

Ripon College
Ripon (920) 748-8107
(800) 947-4766

St. Norbert College
DePere (920) 403-1321

Silver Lake College
Manitowoc (920) 666-6100
(800) 236-4752 ext. 115

Viterbo University
LaCrosse
(608) 796-3085

Wisconsin Lutheran College
Milwaukee
(414) 443-8797

WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGES

Wisconsin Technical College website: www.witechcolleges.com
Phone: 1-800-320-8324 TTY: (608) 267-2483

Blackhawk	Janesville	(800) 498-1282	(608) 743-4422
Chippewa Valley	Eau Claire	(800) 547-2882	(715) 833-6234
Fox Valley	Appleton	(800) 735-3882	(920) 735-2569
Gateway	Kenosha	(800) 247-7122	(262) 564-2320
Lakeshore	Cleveland	(888) 468-6582	(920) 693-1160
Madison Area	Madison	(800) 322-6282	(608) 246-6265
Mid-State	WI Rapids	(877) 422-6782	(715) 422-5452
Milwaukee Area	Milwaukee	(414) 297-6600	(414) 297-7839
Moraine Park	Fond du Lac	(800) 472-4554	(920) 924-3192
Nicolet Area	Rhinelander	(800) 544-3039	(715) 365-4693
North Central	Wausau	(888) 682-7144	(715) 675-3331 ext. 4087
Northeast	Green Bay	(800) 422-6982	(920) 498-5498
Southwest	Fennimore	(800) 362-3322	(608) 822-3262 ext. 2130
Waukesha	Pewaukee	(877) 463-9282	(262) 691-5210
Western	LaCrosse	(800) 322-9982	(608) 785-9875
Wisconsin Indianhead	Shell Lake	(800) 243-9482	(715) 468-2815

OTHER RESOURCES

- Department of Public Instruction
  www.dpi.state.wi.us
  (800) 441-4563
- Department of Workforce Development
  Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
  www.dwd.state.wi.us/dvr/
- Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship Program
  www.dwd.state.wi.us/gwblb/ya.htm
- Heath Resource Center
  www.heath.gwu.edu/
- College is Possible
  www.collegeispossible.org
- Preparing Your Child for College
  www.ed.gov/pubs/Prepare/index.html
- Getting Ready for College Early
  www.ed.gov/pubs/GettingReadyCollegeEarly/#step1
- Office of Student Financial Assistance Programs (OSFAP)
  www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP

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As part of its mission, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's website has links to many other websites. The department, however, is not responsible for the content of other sites nor should links to other sites be inferred as an endorsement of those sites.

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APPENDIX B

Documentation of Disability is Necessary

For Educational Accommodations at Postsecondary Educational Institutions

What Kind of Documentation Do Postsecondary Schools Require?

Postsecondary schools require disability documentation establishing that a student has a disability as defined by the American Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (*see page 3 of this guide*). Because these laws are different from the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which applies to students in K-12, new and/or additional documentation may be needed. The documentation should provide sufficient information so the accommodations that permit equal access to educational activities can be determined. Service eligibility is determined locally with each institution having its own standards and policies for disability documentation. Some schools may require documentation prepared by professionals, such as doctors, psychologists, or other qualified diagnosticians. Although an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan alone may help identify services that have been effective for a student in high school, it is generally not sufficient documentation for postsecondary accommodation eligibility.

What Does the New Documentation Do?

- It establishes that a student *currently* has a substantial limitation to a major life activity.
- As a result of that substantial limitation, accommodations are needed for a student to *equally participate* in educational activities.
- It offers guidance regarding appropriate accommodations for a student in a postsecondary setting.

In Preparation for a Postsecondary Setting, Students Should:

- Know what their disability is and what accommodations benefit them.
- Know how to describe their academic *and* personal strengths and weaknesses.
- Continue to develop self-advocacy skills regarding their accommodations.
- Gather all necessary documentation to establish eligibility for accommodations after high school.
- Investigate potential postsecondary schools and request information about services, accommodations and documentation requirements from each postsecondary setting.
- Contact the postsecondary school during the application process (or sooner) so that accommodations can be discussed and implemented before classes begin.

High Schools are encouraged to:

- Assist students with disabilities in developing a clear post school transition plan.
- Provide as a part of that transition plan, (i) a written educational history of the student's placement in special education/504 services, (ii) all relevant test scores and educational data including those used to establish and maintain eligibility for special services, (iii) evidence of current functional limitations, and (iv) all accommodations and services that were recommended and used by the student in high school.
- Help students develop self-awareness about their disability as well as effective self-advocacy skills that promote student independence and self-reliance.

Final Thoughts

- Communication is essential – begin the transition to postsecondary education early!
- College students with disabilities must be given an equal opportunity to benefit from the program (an opportunity comparable to that afforded non-disabled students), however;
- The law ensures opportunity; it doesn't ensure success.
- Successful college students take primary responsibility for accommodations, communication and services.
- Assistance is available if students ask for it.

The Document *Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities* is available from the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Washington, D.C. 20202 and is online at: http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCR/transition.html

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